



ARLINGTON REDEVELOPMENT BOARD

TOWN HALL ARLINGTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02476

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April 27, 2016

To the Members of Town Meeting –

I write to explain the vote of the Arlington Redevelopment Board on Monday, April 25, changing the Board's recommended votes on Articles 8-10 to "no action."

The Master Plan has tasked the ARB with studying and considering certain zoning recommendations to address teardowns and other residential development, as well as preserving the character of Arlington's neighborhoods. Following Town Meeting last year, the Board and other stakeholders began to establish the Master Plan Implementation Committee, which first met in late fall. At this point, the MPIC began to study possible zoning changes at the direction of the ARB in furtherance of this task.

Several public meetings were held as the ARB, MPIC and the Planning Department headed toward the draft of the warrant articles that ultimately became Articles 8-10.

Following a public hearing in late March, an information session for Town Meeting Members on April 14, and several precinct meetings, it became clear to me that there was a significant amount of confusion and discontent surrounding these proposals, and that more work and more public input was required to develop more of a consensus around solutions before recommending their adoption to Town Meeting. It was also clear that Articles 8-10, as written, created a handful of unintended complications and potential negative effects on present homeowners. Accordingly, I requested that the Board reconsider its vote at the first possible meeting.

Although zoning is complicated, it is my firm belief that any zoning proposal put before Town Meeting by the ARB should be as clear and readily understandable as possible, particularly when the proposal has such a major effect. Significant public input revealed that this was not the case with our proposed articles, and that more time and research is needed to ensure that we are following the direction of the Arlington Master Plan and the residents of Arlington. I welcome and encourage all interested parties to participate in this discussion moving forward.

I urge the members of Town Meeting to support the ARB's decision, and to vote no on all remaining zoning warrant articles this year (Articles 8-16). The Board is wholly committed to the implementation of the Arlington Master Plan while at the same time protecting property values, allowing homeowners to take full advantage of their own property, and to keep Arlington an open, welcoming town with strong neighborhood values.

Sincerely,

Andrew G. Bunnell, Chair